



# Derby/Oaks Update

Thursday, May 2, 2019

## MANDELLA DISCUSSES DEFECTION OF OMAHA BEACH; HAIKAL DEALING WITH ABSCESS

LOUISVILLE, KY (Thursday, May 2, 2019) – Trainer **Richard Mandella** met with reporters Thursday morning a day after declaring Kentucky Derby morning-line favorite Omaha Beach out of Saturday's race because of an entrapped epiglottitis.

"The good part is that the horse is going to be OK," Mandella said. "It really isn't that serious. It's just the timing. We're going to do a simple procedure (at the **Rood & Riddle Equine Hospital** in Lexington) today and he'll be out of training for two or three weeks. Then we'll plan another campaign."

The defection of the Fox Hill Farm's runner allowed **Bodexpress** to gain a spot in the starting gate for the 145th Run for the Roses.

Meanwhile, Shadwell Stable's **Haikal** is dealing with an abscess in his left front and did not train Thursday morning. The shoe is off and the foot is being soaked and iced.

Trainer **Kiaran McLaughlin** said if Haikal can train Friday morning, he remains in the race. If not, he's out.

**BODEXPRESS – Top Racing LLC, Global Thoroughbred and GDS Racing Stable's Bodexpress**, who drew into the 20-horse Kentucky Derby field when **Omaha Beach** was scratched Wednesday, visited the starting gate, paddock and galloped 1 ½ miles at Churchill Downs Thursday.

"He did very good. It looked to me that he moved really good over the track," trainer **Gustavo Delgado** said.

Although Bodexpress is still a maiden and hadn't earned sufficient points to qualify for the Derby field when entries were taken Tuesday, Delgado went ahead and shipped the son of **Bodemeister** from his base at Gulfstream Park West in hopes of drawing into the race.

"You only have one chance," Delgado said.

Bodexpress, whose maiden status may be a result of encountering some rough trips, finished second behind **Maximum Security** in the Florida Derby (GI) at Gulfstream.

"This horse is a good horse and he is doing very, very good," said Delgado, Venezuela's all-time winningest trainer who has been based in South Florida since 2014.

Bodexpress will be the second Derby starter trained by Delgado. **Majesto**, who finished second behind **Nyquist** in the 2016 Florida Derby, checked in 18th behind Nyquist in the Derby.

**Chris Landeros** will ride in his first Kentucky Derby while ending Bodexpress for the first time.

"I'm ready. I'm excited and blessed to have the opportunity. I feel bad for the connections of Omaha Beach, but everything happens for a reason. I'm blessed with the opportunity to get in. I'll make the most of it, have some fun

and enjoy the moment," Landeros said. "Hopefully, it will be the first of many."

Landeros also will ride in the Oaks for the first time Friday aboard Gulfstream Park Oaks (GII) winner **Champagne Anyone**.

**BY MY STANDARDS – Allied Racing Stables' By My Standards** galloped 1 ½ miles Thursday morning for locally based trainer **Bret Calhoun**.

"We all have to cross our fingers until we make it to the Derby," Calhoun said. "I feel awful for **Richard (Mandella)** and his connections. This is a crazy game and anything can happen. We just have to hold our breaths until we get there."

By My Standards is scheduled to have a "normal" day of training Friday, according to Calhoun.

**CODE OF HONOR – William S. Farish's Fountain of Youth** winner **Code of Honor** galloped 1 1/4 miles Thursday at his usual time of 6:30 a.m. and once again took a leisurely stroll back to the barn.

Hall of Famer trainer **Shug McGaughey**, who has won lots of major races, is sending out just his eighth Kentucky Derby starter with Code of Honor and first since winning the "Run for the Roses" in 2013 with **Orb**. McGaughey said he's not following a specific routine this time around.

"We're not doing anything different than what we've been doing with him," McGaughey said. "We're just going out and doing our thing. Orb had a work over the track and that was on a Monday. Code of Honor had a work over the track Sunday. He schooled in the paddock. It's probably easier on me this time. I'm just taking it all in and taking an easy."

"I feel like the pressure is off this year. A friend told me 'Shug, you know the first one is just the bait.' I'm excited about this one, too. I'd love the chance to win a second Derby."

**COUNTRY HOUSE/TACITUS – Juddmonte Farms' Tacitus and Mrs. J. V. Shields Jr. et al.'s Country House** did very much the same thing Thursday as they did Wednesday for trainer **Bill Mott**. The Wood Memorial (GII) winner Tacitus and Arkansas Derby (GI) third-place finisher Country House galloped about 1½ miles on the main track and walked through the paddock.

Country House has had four starts this year, while Tacitus has only raced twice. Both had a pair of starts at age 2 -- all in maiden special weight company. Last year, Mott came into the Derby with **Juddmonte's Hofburg**, who only raced three times prior and once as a juvenile.

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"They both raced at 2, which I think is important," Mott said. "I would say that Tacitus had two races as a 2-year-old as opposed to the one for Hofburg last year and that makes a difference. Having to race as a 2-year-old is extremely important. Of course everyone can refer to **Justify**, but I think that that's going to happen maybe once in a hundred years.

"I think in the past they did make a bigger deal out of (being lightly raced), but I felt after the two races he had as a 2-year-old had been enough for him at the time," he continued. "He was a big, growthy colt and I didn't think he needed more than those races. It looked like he benefited more from stopping on him at that time. He put on weight, filled out and matured. Having the races as a 2-year-old is most important mentally, when you can expose them to different situations. He and Country House has a good foundation and are still figuring it out."

**Marianne Scherer** (Country House) and **Juan Quintero** (Tacitus) were again in the respective irons Thursday morning.

**CUTTING HUMOR/SPINOFF** – The Kentucky Derby-bound duo of **Starlight Stable's Cutting Humor** and **Wertheimer and Frere's Spinoff** went trackside during the 15-minute Oaks-Derby training period at Churchill Downs Thursday morning as welcomed sun splashed the big oval instead of the promised rain.

Cutting Humor had exercise rider **Fernando Rivera** in the boot and Spinoff was piloted by exercise rider **Josue Garcia**. The colts proceeded to both gallop about a mile and a quarter and work in a visit to the starting gate.

Trainer **Todd Pletcher**, as he often does with his big-race horses, grabbed his trusty binoculars and drove to the frontside to watch his 3-year-olds go through their paces. Back at the barn, he said he liked what he saw.

"They both galloped well and behaved at the gate," the conditioner reported.

Pletcher has named **Corey Lanerie** to rider Cutting Humor and given the call on Spinoff to **Manny Franco**.

**GAME WINNER/IMPROBABLE/ROADSTER** – As he has done for the last handful of days, **Bob Baffert** made the trek from Barn 33 to his signature gap to oversee his latest handiwork.

He watched two of his Kentucky Derby entrants – **Roadster** and fellow Grade 1 winner **Improbable** – take their respective gallops around the Churchill Downs track during the 7:30-7:45 a.m. special training period for Derby and Oaks contenders and then was back at 9 a.m. when reigning juvenile male champion and newly minted morning-line favorite **Game Winner** came on under **Humberto "Beto" Gomez** to gallop a couple spins beneath the Twin Spires.

It was routine morning for his trio, one without incident or alarm. But given what had transpired around him the past 24 hours, the last thing the Hall of Fame trainer was about to do was breathe easy.

The scratch of Grade 1 winner and morning-line favorite **Omaha Beach** from the Kentucky Derby - coupled with news that graded-stakes winner **Haikal** was battling a foot abscess –

cast a sobering tone over the Churchill backside Thursday morning as fellow horsemen empathized with the gut punch trainer **Richard Mandella** and owner **Rick Porter** had to absorb. Having been on that side of the fence himself, Baffert stated such situations are why his enthusiasm with now having the top three betting choices on the morning line is tempered to say the least.

"When I heard the news I felt this sickening feeling for Richard and (jockey) **Mike (Smith)** because I know Richard was so excited about it," Baffert said. "And when you have a horse like that...it's so hard to come (here) with a horse like that. I felt horrible for him because I know what can happen. We're all competitors, but at the same time we wanted to see each other do well.

"He's my neighbor (at Santa Anita) and I know what it meant to him. The stars were lining up, everything was going smooth. That's why when everyone is like 'You don't seem that excited' it's because I know that this can happen. We're all on pins and needles the whole way. Until I get that saddle on them and throw the jockey up, that's when my job is done."

All three of his Derby hopefuls have tested Baffert's legendary skill in getting themselves to this point.

Roadster, ironically, had to undergo throat surgery himself following his third-place finish in the Del Mar Futurity (GI) but has returned better than ever – as he demonstrated when he defeated Game Winner in the Santa Anita Derby (GI).

Though Game Winner is still seeking his first win of 2019, **Gary** and **Mary West's** colt captured the Sentient Jet Breeders' Cup Juvenile (GI) here last November and has not been worse than second in six career starts. The same applies to **Improbable**, who won the Los Alamitos Futurity (GI) last December and was second in both the Rebel Stakes (GII) and to **Omaha Beach** in Arkansas Derby (GI).

"We were looking to try and have another shot at (Omaha Beach)," said **Elliott Walden**, CEO and President of **WinStar Farm**, which co-owns **Improbable** along with **China Horse Club International** and **Starlight Racing**. "But he's a great horse, he'll come back and have a big year. He was probably one of the horses who was going to be close to the lead so it will be interesting to see what takes shape there (pace wise)."

Hall of Fame jockey Smith had been the regular rider of Roadster but opted to stay on Omaha Beach for the Kentucky Derby, opening up the opportunity for **Florent Geroux** to get on the former. When asked if there was any talk of trying to get Smith back on Roadster for Saturday, Baffert quickly shot down that notion.

"No, Flo is on," Baffert said. "I never thought of that. I actually called Flo up last night and it was so funny he was like 'Are you taking me off boss?' I was like 'No, I'm all in.' I could never do that."

**GRAY MAGICIAN** – **Wachtel Stable**, **Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners** and **Gary Barber's** UAE Derby runner-up **Gray Magician** did very little Thursday morning at Churchill Downs, according to **Peter Miller's** assistant trainer **Ashlie Campbell**.

"He just walked today," she said from Barn 39. "He's doing well. He schooled yesterday in the paddock during the races."

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The son of **Graydar** is one of the more seasoned in the race, especially with shipping. Never worse than fifth in his career, he has hit the board six of eight times and raced over four tracks in three very different regions: California, Maryland and Dubai. He enters the Kentucky Derby (GI) off a five-week rest after his trip to Dubai.

"I would think that running any after Dubai on just 35 days is a little quick, but sometimes they surprise you," Miller said. "I thought initially he would need 60 days because I've had some that even needed 90 days off, but with him I think it felt like a trip up the 405 (freeway in Los Angeles).

"From a physical standpoint, he's held his weight and his coat is shiny," Miller continued. "He's doing what you want to see. He's eating well, his attitude is good and he is training forwardly. That's what I'm looking at and as long as he keeps doing that, we're happy."

Thirteen runners from the UAE Derby have attempted the Kentucky Derby, including nine winners, but the best finish was from **Master of Hounds** in 2011 who ran fifth.

**HAIKAL** – What has been an uneventful spring for promising Withers Stakes (GIII) winner **Haikal** changed at an inopportune time Thursday morning, as the **Shadwell Farm** homebred and **Kiaran McLaughlin** trainee was found to have a hoof abscess on his left front. The son of **Daaher** did not leave Barn 41 to exercise during the morning.

"We didn't take him out training today because he has an abscess in his left front foot," McLaughlin said. "The shoe is off and we are soaking and icing it. We will shoe him first thing in the (Friday) morning and train him if able. The horse will tell us. We will either be in or out (of the Kentucky Derby) by tomorrow morning at scratch time.

"It's just terrible timing," he continued. "It's a situation that will correct itself and is similar to **Omaha Beach**. You feel bad for the connections. Just bad timing -- that's all. We'll keep our fingers crossed."

**LONG RANGE TODDY** – **Willis Horton Racing LLC's** **Long Range Toddy** galloped 1 1/2 miles Thursday under regular exercise rider **Brooke Stillion** and schooled in the gate.

Hall of Fame trainer **Steve Asmussen**, who has two seconds and two thirds in the Kentucky Derby, but is still seeking his first win with his 20th starter, says he more worried about the chance of a wet track than the outside post. **Long Range Toddy** drew post 18, but will move in one spot with the scratch of **Omaha Beach**.

"I'm more concerned with the impending weather than the post position," Asmussen said. "He breaks really well. He can get where he needs to be. He's handy and can get out of the gate quickly. We just don't want a track like we had in the Arkansas Derby (when sloppy). When he came off the bridle, he just struggled with the track. I've watched the race several times and he was just swimming."

**MASTER FENCER** – **Katsumi** and **Yasuyo Yoshizawa's** **Koichi Tsunoda**-trained **Master Fencer** had an easy day Thursday, one day after putting in one final piece of work in 1:05.20 for five furlongs. Appearing quite relaxed, accordingly to his connections, he left the quarantine barn at 6:30 a.m. with exercise rider **Yosuke Kono** in the saddle and schooled in the paddock before returning.

"We hope to bring back the trophy to Japan, but right now we are just happy to be in the race," said **Katsumi Yoshizawa** through a translator. "Right now, I am not thinking about it too much. I am enjoying the race and being a part of such a great event. I have dreamt of coming here and have actually gone to the Keeneland September Sale for the last 15 years with that dream in my mind. When Master Fencer ran second last time, I was very disappointed because I thought I would miss the race again. Fortunately, the winner declined the offer from Churchill Downs, so I was lucky enough to receive the offer. I feel very lucky to be here.

"I actually purchased his dam, **Sexy Zamurai** (by **Deputy Minister**) out of the Keeneland sale and his sire, **Just A Way**, was a top horse who won the Dubai (Turf) whose sons and daughters are running very well on both turf and dirt," he continued. "I'm not sure how Master Fencer will run. He's a good-acting horse. Hopefully he will change leads and gallop well over this course."

**MAXIMUM SECURITY** – **Gary** and **Mary West's** **Maximum Security** galloped 1 ¼ miles at Churchill Downs Thursday morning.

The morning-line odds for Maximum Security in Saturday's Kentucky Derby (GI) were adjusted from 10-1 to 8-1 because of Wednesday's scratch of **Omaha Beach**, who had been installed as the 4-1 morning-line favorite.

"It does change things a little bit. I'm not talking speed or not speed. I'm just talking one live horse is out of there," trainer **Jason Servis** said. "I feel really bad for [trainer **Richard Mandella** and [owner **Rick Porter**]."

Servis managed to find a bit of levity in the unfortunate scratch of the Arkansas Derby (GI) winner.

"I was glad to get [Omaha Beach's jockey] **Mike Smith** out of there," Servis quipped. "I was more worried about Mike than the horse. Having him outside of me, I wasn't thrilled about that."

The prospect of an off-track on Saturday doesn't concern Servis, who saddled Maximum Security for 6 ½-length victory over a muddy track at Gulfstream in his second lifetime start.

"He won on an off-track. He [Maximum Security] checked a lot of boxes. He won a major prep – the Florida Derby; he won in the mud; he lay third and came off the pace; he's undefeated; his mare is a half to **Flat Out**, who won the Jockey Club Gold Cup twice at a mile and a quarter. It doesn't matter what you like or don't like, he's checking a lot of boxes."

**Luis Saez**, who guided Maximum Security to victory in the Florida Derby (GI), has the return mount.

**OMAHA BEACH** –The morning after the heartbreak, trainer **Richard Mandella** was doing his best to keep a stiff upper lip at Barn 28.



"What are you going to do," he said with a shrug of the shoulders. "You might say 'That's racing,' or you might say 'That's life,' or you might say it's some of both."

The reference, of course, was to the unfortunate withdrawal of **Fox Hill Farms' Omaha Beach** from the role of favorite in Saturday's 145th Kentucky Derby Wednesday evening following the discovery of an entrapped epiglottis in the colt's throat. It was, naturally, a hard blow to the veteran trainer who has more than 45 years in the business and appeared to have his best shot yet to climb the Kentucky Derby mountain.

Wednesday night, after the announcement was made, Mandella was asked if he'd ever had a punch in the gut like that before.

"Not one that hard," he said. "Not that hard."

But employing classic trainer mentality, he quickly pivoted to the positive.

"The good part is that the horse is going to be OK," he noted. "It really isn't that serious. It's just the timing. We're going to do a simple procedure (at **Rood & Riddle Equine Hospital** in Lexington) today and he'll be out of training for two or three weeks. Then we'll plan another campaign."

Mandella recalled that Omaha Beach had shown signs of a "sore throat" about a week ago and it was treated and appeared to clear up. But yesterday, during a strong morning gallop, the big **War Front** colt coughed several times indicating things were amiss. A veterinarian was called in and an endoscopic examination revealed the entrapped epiglottis.

At a press conference in the track's Media Center on the frontside at approximately 10:15 Thursday morning, the trainer noted that he had no choice but to scratch from the race.

"If I had run him with this and at the quarter pole on Saturday he couldn't get his air, I would have to live with that forever," he said. "It just wouldn't have been right for him. He's a very special horse and he deserves the best."

Mandella said it was hard to make Wednesday night calls to owner **Rick Porter** and to **Spendthrift Farm** (where the horse will stand stallion duties) owner **B. Wayne Hughes**, but he said the two classy gentlemen wound up expressing their primary concern for him, more than he had for them.

"That's what happens when you work for wonderful people," he said.

The trainer said he'd stay around for a few days to make sure that the horse was doing fine following the surgery, then was likely to head back to California Saturday with his wife **Randi**.

Asked how he was able to handle such a seemingly insurmountable hurt – one that he admitted left him "devastated" Wednesday night -- he remembered a line from the now-retired California trainer **Mel Stute**:

"I've got a lot of experience with disappointments," he said. "This game will do that to you."

**PLUS QUE PARFAIT** – **Imperial Racing's** UAE Derby (GII) champion **Plus Que Parfait**, whose \$1,590,400 in earnings is second only to de facto favorite **Game Winner**, continued his steady path toward the Kentucky Derby (GI) on Thursday morning. The **Brendan Walsh**-trained chestnut son

of **Point of Entry** left Barn 9 at 7:30 a.m. and proceeded to gallop one mile on the main dirt track before stopping at the starting gate to school and then galloping another mile—all under assistant trainer **Tom Molloy**. He schooled in the paddock during Thursday's second race.

"We wanted to have him stand in there nice and quietly," Walsh said. "That's the whole point; keeping his mind ready. He's doing great and it seems like he's got good energy and using it all the right ways. He's been very good like that."

Ridden in Dubai by **Jose Ortiz** and wearing blinkers for the first time, he returns with the headgear, but will switch pilots to **Ricardo Santana**, who rode him in his sole other victory. Said win was a gritty Keeneland maiden score in November over subsequent graded stakes winners **Harvey Wallbanger** and **Cutting Humor**. The latter also lines up in the Derby against the \$135,000 Keeneland September 2017 purchase.

"He needs a rider like **Ricardo**," Walsh said. "Even after we put the blinkers on him in Dubai, he needs to be told sometimes what to do and to be pointed in the right direction. He's a genuine horse and Ricardo is an excellent rider who knows the horse. He's been a good and a lucky rider for me."

The best finish by a UAE Derby winner was **China Visit** in 2000, who finished sixth at Churchill Downs.

**TAX** – **R. A. Hill Stable**, **Reeves Thoroughbred Racing**, **Hugh Lynch** and **Corms Racing Stable's** Tax galloped a 1 ¼ miles at Churchill Downs Thursday morning.

"I put a bigger gallop in him today. Tomorrow, as is our routine, we'll have a short gallop. He'll only gallop three-quarters of a mile," trainer **Danny Gargan** said. "I just wanted to take a little edge off him."

The Derby field lost a prominent contender when **Omaha Beach** was scratched Wednesday, but the defection of the morning-line favorite won't alter Gargan's game plan Saturday.

"It's not going to change what I'm doing. I'm going to do what I do," Gargan said. "As I've said, we're going to break running, try to get to the rail. If the one horse [**War of Will**] goes we'll sit in behind him. If he doesn't go, we'll put ourselves out there and then take back. Hopefully, we'll sit in there fourth, fifth, or sixth."

The Wood Memorial (GII) runner-up will be ridden by **Junior Alvarado**.

**VEKOMA** – **Randy Hill** and **Mike Gatsas' Vekoma** galloped a mile and a quarter under exercise rider **Cindy Hutter** for trainer **George Weaver**.

Weaver said Vekoma probably would use the 5:15-5:30 training window Friday morning for Derby and Oaks horses.

Vekoma passed a paddock schooling test Wednesday afternoon and that part of his Derby preparation is complete, "He doesn't need to go back," Weaver said.

Vekoma never has raced on an "off" track but does not believe it will be an issue Saturday that has a forecast calling for rain all day.

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"He is bred to handle it and I have always thought this track is one of the best when it is wet," Weaver said. "He should be forwardly placed and I hope he doesn't have to eat too much mud."

Vekoma's dam, **Mona de Momma**, won the 2010 Humana Distaff (GI) here in the mud.

"I told him this morning that his momma liked it," Weaver said with a grin.

**WAR OF WILL** –With two days to go before the biggest race of his life, **Gary Barber's** multiple graded stakes winner continues to give trainer **Mark Casse** hope that his inside post position will not be a hindrance to him delivering his best run.

After watching **War of Will** put in another strong gallop under exercise rider **Jose Vasquez** Thursday, Casse said he was seeing a horse who not only had the speed to get away from post one in good order, but also had the potential to shut off and relax during his expected 10-furlong journey.

"We're ready," Casse declared. "What was nice today was I thought earlier on in the week he was sharp, and you want sharp but you also want relaxed. And he's right where he does his best running. I thought he went really good today."

With news coming down that **Haikal** is battling a foot abscess and could potentially scratch, War of Will could have his starting point slightly improved upon. If the field is reduced to 19, the inside stall would be left open and War of Will would then start from stall No. 2.

Like many horsemen on the Churchill backside, however, benefiting for another's misfortune is not something Casse relishes.

"I've been there. I feel bad for **Richard (Mandella)** and I feel bad for Mr. **(Rick) Porter**," Casse said. "It's bittersweet, obviously the less competition the better for us, but you don't like winning races that way. And you feel their pain. There is only one Kentucky Derby so when you get knocked out of it, it's tough. And I can only imagine having the favorite."

"I always tell everybody - I've been telling Gary Barber for six months -- when you have a Derby horse you hold your breath. That's all you do."

**WIN WIN WIN** – **Live Oak Plantation's** **Win Win Win** galloped a mile and a half under exercise rider **Melanie Williams** for trainer **Mike Trombetta**.

Trombetta said Win Win Win would use the 5:15-5:30 Derby and Oaks training window the next two days with a gallop Friday and a jog Saturday. Win Win Win schooled in the paddock this afternoon with horses in the second race.

Trombetta made a quick trip back to Maryland Wednesday after training with his wife **Marie** to pick up their two sons, **Michael** and **Dominic**, who were trackside this morning.

"We flew in and spent about an hour and then flew back," Trombetta said. "Our daughter **Nicole**, who is 25, is driving in tonight. She was about their age when I was here before (with **Sweetnorthernstain** in 2006)."

Win Win Win shows one race on an "off" track and Trombetta was asked about the potential for an off track Saturday and how it may affect his colt.

"He ran in the Heft (at Laurel Dec. 29) and the track was listed as good," Trombetta said. "It was wet, but it was kind of greasy. I don't think it will bother him. I hate for all the people."

In the Heft, Win Win Win finished second to **Alwaysmining** going seven furlongs.

"Alwaysmining has won his last three races easily," Trombetta said of the Maryland-bred who has won those black-type races by a combined 22 ½ lengths. "I know those weren't the biggest of races, but he is going to tough going into the Preakness off four weeks off."

## BARN LIST – KENTUCKY DERBY

Horse	Trainer	Barn
Bodexpress	Gustavo Delgado	41
By My Standards	Bret Calhoun	23
Code of Honor	Shug McGaughey	43
Country House	Bill Mott	19
Cutting Humor	Todd Pletcher	40
Game Winner	Bob Baffert	33
Gray Magician	Peter Miller	39
Haikal	Kieran McLaughlin	41
Improbable	Bob Baffert	33
Long Range Toddy	Steve Asmussen	38
Master Fencer (JPN)	Koichi Tsunoda	16
Maximum Security	Jason Servis	43
Plus Que Parfait	Brendan Walsh	9
Roadster	Bob Baffert	33
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## PAST PERFORMANCES AND STAKES HISTORY

- Brisnet.com Free Past Performances:  
<http://bit.ly/2XHAp1c>
- Brisnet.com Kentucky Derby Study Materials:  
<http://www.brisnet.com/content/2019/04/2019-kentucky-derby-study-materials/>
- KentuckyDerby.com Expert Selections:  
<https://www.kentuckyderby.com/wager/expert-picks>

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## KENTUCKY OAKS UPDATE

**BELLAFINA** – Trainer **Simon Callaghan** was at the barn Thursday morning to oversee the last bit of major exercise for his filly **Bellafina**, the 2-1 morning-line favorite for Friday's \$1.25 million Longines Kentucky Oaks. The handsome 3-year-old daughter of **Quality Road**, owned by **Kaleem Shah**, went trackside with exerciser rider **Georgio Moreno** up and assistant trainer **Carlos Santamaria** alongside on a pony.

Callaghan was wearing a sling on his right arm, the result of a dislocated right shoulder Wednesday morning when he took a tumble trying to navigate a tight set of stairs at his rental house in Louisville.

"It's coming along," the conditioner said of his condition. "If I'm in the sling, I'm good. It's a bit tough trying to sleep without it, but we'll manage. They tell me 10 days or so to get the swelling down, so I'll get it all sorted out when I get back to California."

Bellafina was out on the track during the special 15-minute Oaks-Derby training period starting at 7:30. She galloped steadily for a mile and a half.

Callaghan said he liked what he saw.

"She's doing really well," the trainer said. "She got over (the track) well today. I'm very pleased with where she is coming into this race."

With rain in the forecast the next few days in Kentucky, Callaghan was asked how he thought his charge – who has raced eight times, all on fast tracks – might handle an "off" surface.

"I think she'll be OK," he said. "The Quality Roads all seem to do well on wet tracks. I'm not that worried about it."

The trainer said he'd send out Bellafina for a light jog at about 5:15 Oaks morning.

**CHAMPAGNE ANYONE** – **Six Column Stables** and **Randy Bloch's Champagne Anyone** completed her training for Friday's Oaks by jogging to the front side of the track and then galloping a mile and a half under exercise rider **Kara Lee**.

Trainer **Ian Wilkes** said the Gulfstream Park Oaks (GII) winner would not go to the track Friday morning.

Wilkes will be trying for stakes double Friday when he sends out **Bourbon Resolution** in the seventh race, the \$400,000 Alysheba (GII). Wilkes has won a stake during Derby Week the past two years, winning the 2017 Alysheba with **Bird Song** and the Opening Verse last year with **Mr Cub**.

**Chris Landeros**, who has been aboard Champagne Anyone in all of her starts, has the mount Friday for his first ride in the Oaks.

"It's a big opportunity for my family and my career to have a mount in the Oaks and Derby," said Landeros, who will ride **Bodexpress** in the Derby. "I worked hard to get to this level of riding and we had a lot of momentum from the meet at Gulfstream over the winter."

"This means the world to me to ride in both of these races – the two top races in the country. It's a very interesting situation because I've had some time to dissect the Oaks knowing I was riding 'Champagne' for about a month. Now, I'll get to work really diving through the Derby."

**CHOCOLATE KISSES** – Exercise rider **Kim Carroll** has been getting on Honeybee Stakes (GIII) winner **Chocolate Kisses** for about the last seven months, so she knows a thing or two about when the daughter of **Candy Ride (ARG)** is at her best.

In the past few days when Chocolate Kisses has come on later in the morning after 9 o'clock and skipped over the Churchill Downs track, Carroll says she has felt a horse who has never been happier doing their job.

"I think she's actually enjoying all the activity and what not," said Carroll, wife of **Mark Casse** assistant trainer **David Carroll**. "It was nice because I gallop her when the track is really fresh and it's quiet and I think she feels a little special doing it that way. She's been in great form, she's just a happy girl."

Chocolate Kisses has shown ability on both surfaces, breaking her maiden over the turf at Saratoga last July and winning on the lawn at Fair Grounds in January prior to her Honeybee victory March 9. Her physical talent is something Kim Carroll says has always been evident. The trick has been getting her quick mind to adjust accordingly.

"I feel as if she definitely has matured mentally," Kim Carroll said. "She's able to take things in a lot better. Before she would be a little more panicky, just being younger and what not. But now that she's raced and she's been to different places, you always have to do different things with her. You do it like you would do with a kid – step by step by step – so that it's all introduced to her where there is nothing to worry about. And her confidence level each time you do something has been really good. She's smart, she's happy, she loves what she does."

**DUNBAR ROAD** – For **Peter M. Brant's Dunbar Road**, it's just a matter of getting a spot in the 14-horse starting gate for Friday's Kentucky Oaks (GI). If she gets in as the first also eligible, she'll be the 5-1 second choice.

She was out for her regular gallop with her exercise rider **Kriss Bon** during Thursday's training session for Oaks and Derby horses.

"We're on the outside looking in, and we're looking for a scratch," trainer **Chad Brown** said. "She looks great and she's ready."

**FLOR DE LA MAR** – As has been her customary routine the past few days, **Godolphin Racing's Flor de La Mar** came out at 9 a.m. along with stablemate **Game Winner** and galloped about a mile and a half under **Jose Conteras**.

Showcasing the same striking looks as her sire, **Tiznow**, Flor de La Mar is also expected to channel her father in being at her best as she gets older, trainer **Bob Baffert** said.

The ability she showed finishing second to **Bellafina** in the Santa Anita Oaks (GI) however was enough to give her a chance to become the first horse owned by **Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum** to take the lilies.

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**JAYWALK – D.J. Stable LLC and Cash is King LLC's** Jaywalk jogged 1 1/8 miles and stood in the starting gate Thursday morning at Churchill Downs, where the **John Servis**-trained filly captured the Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies (GI) last fall.

Servis saddled **Cathryn Sophia** for a victory in the 2016 Kentucky Oaks (GI).

"It was exciting. The biggest thing for me is that she went into the race great and when I saw her on the backside, she settled so nice. She was just cruising, just as comfortable as she could be. I mean I didn't know she was going to win then but I knew she was going to be tough. I knew she was going to run her race," Servis said. "She ran lights-out."

Servis said there are no similarities between Cathryn Sophia and Jaywalk.

"They're completely different," he said. "Cathryn was a filly who battled through some issues all along. You had to train her accordingly. She was tough. She was a handful, where this filly is just the opposite. She's laid back and quiet."

Jaywalk, who was honored with an Eclipse Award as last year's outstanding 2-year-old filly, is winless in two starts this year. The daughter of **Cross Traffic** finished fourth at 1-5 favorite in the Davona Dale (GII) at Gulfstream before finishing third in the Ashland (GI) at Keeneland.

"I told the owners going into the first race we'd probably lose that race, but the way it came up, I thought we might win it anyway. It didn't come up that tough. But our main goal since coming back from the farm has been the Oaks," Servis said. "That's what we've been pointing for. We brought her along hoping she peaks this week."

**Javier Castellano** has the mount.

**JELTRIN – ADR Racing Stable LLC's Jeltrin** jogged twice around the track Thursday morning at Churchill Downs in preparation for a start in Friday's Kentucky Oaks (GI).

"It's the same that she did before her last race," said trainer **Alexis Delgado**, who saddled Jeltrin for a 51-1 upset victory in the Davona Dale (GII) at Gulfstream Park.

Showers forecast for Friday open the possibility that the Oaks may be run on an off track.

"She's never run on a sloppy track, but when she gallops on a sloppy track at Gulfstream she's happy," Delgado said.

Jeltrin debuted with a second-place finish in a \$35,000 maiden claiming race at Gulfstream last September before graduating by eight lengths for a \$50,000 tag at Gulfstream Park West five weeks later. She finished fourth in the Glitter Woman and Forward Gal (GIII) at Gulfstream before breaking through with her win in the Davona Dale.

"In the beginning I knew she was a nice filly, but I didn't know she would be this good. Every race she was improving and improving," Delgado said. "Right now, she is in 100-percent condition."

**Luis Saez**, who rode Jeltrin to victory in the Davona Dale, has the return mount.

**LADY APPLE – Phoenix Thoroughbred III and KatieRich Stables' Lady Apple** galloped 1 1/4 miles Thursday.

"Everything's good," trainer Steve Asmussem said. "I'm just happy to be here, especially after yesterday (referring to the scratch of Kentucky Derby favorite **Omaha Beach**)."

**LIORA – Trainer Wayne Catalano** declared all was good with the daughter of **Candy Ride (ARG)** after watching her jog over the Churchill Downs track under jockey **Channing Hill** on Thursday.

"She's about ready to roll," Catalano said, adding that he might walk the filly in the shedrow or jog a bit Friday morning "just to get her out" in advance of her Kentucky Oaks run in the afternoon.

Liora scored her lone career graded stakes win over sealed, sloppy going at Churchill Downs when she defeated Restless Rider in the Golden Rod Stakes (GII) last November.

"We know she's going to go out and run her race," said **Annette Bacola of Coffee Pot Stables**, which owns Liora. "She may surprise a few people because she is being overlooked a bit. We're not that concerned about weather or anything because when she won the Grade II here, the track conditions were not ideal. She'll just go out there and do it. She's doing what she loves."

**MOTION EMOTION – Mark DeDomencio's Motion Emotion** galloped 1 1/4 miles Thursday and schooled in the gate on her final day of training before the Oaks.

"The filly has given us nothing but confidence," trainer **Tom Van Berg** said. "She's doing exceptionally well. We just need some luck Friday."

A victory in the Kentucky Oaks would be the first Grade 1 for Van Berg, but he had a major mentor to help prepare him for the big stage. Van Berg returned to training in late 2017 after a 10-year hiatus when he took over the stable of his late father, Hall of Famer **Jack Van Berg**.

When asked if he's following any advice his father gave him this week, Van Berg said, "Keep it humorous. You have to keep the humor in it. Otherwise, it will get to you. Just enjoy it. Do right by the horse and they'll do right by you. Dad always took care of the small stuff. He said the rest will happen if you're good enough and in the right spot."

**OUT FOR A SPIN – Commonwealth Stable, Randy Bradshaw and Stonestreet Stables Out for a Spin** galloped about 1 1/2 miles Thursday morning for trainer **Dallas Stewart**.

"The weather is out of our control for Friday," Stewart said. "We'll see what happens but the good news is she already won two races on an 'off' track."

Out for a Spin broke her maiden in her second-career start over a listed "sloppy" surface at Fair Grounds on Dec. 29. Two starts later, the daughter of Hard Spun won a first-level allowance by 3 3/4 lengths at Fair Grounds on a "muddy" surface.

**POINT OF HONOR – Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners and Stetson Racing's Point of Honor**, who will need two defections from the Kentucky Oaks field to draw into the race, galloped a mile and a quarter under **Cindy Hutter** for trainer **George Weaver**.

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**POSITIVE SPIRIT** – After trainer **Rodolphe Brisset** took **Positive Spirit** onto the track for her next-to-last gallop Thursday, he said that she appears set for her first Grade I test with jockey **Manny Franco**. She drew the No. 6 post and is 30-1 on the morning line.

“We just went a mile-and-an-eighth gallop, then stood in the gate, just to make sure she is all ready,” said Brisset, who gallops many of his own horses. “She did great. It was an easy day.”

Brisset said he’s not worried about predictions of rain and believes that **Michael J. Ryan** and **Gerry Dilger**’s filly can handle an off track.

“No idea, not sure what will happen,” Brisset said. “I don’t know. She has breezed on the slop. Until you try it, you just never know. I don’t think any kickback will be a problem for her. You can train in the slop, but until you have a race, you just never know.”

**RESTLESS RIDER** – Ashland Stakes (GI) runner-up **Restless Rider** galloped under regular exercise rider **Danny Ramsey**, said trainer **Kenny McPeek**, who was on hand to supervise her final preparations for the Oaks on Thursday.

“She’s had a good last couple of days on the track, and today we’re just putting some finishing touches,” McPeek said. “All uncomplicated.”

Like several of her foes in the Oaks, **Restless Rider** already has faced the added challenge of a sloppy track. She raced last November in the Golden Rod (GII) on a muddy Churchill surface.

“It won’t bother her,” McPeek said. “In the Golden Rod, she finished second (a nose behind **Liora**). She won’t have any trouble.”

**SERENGETI EMPRESS** – One of the few changes that trainer **Tom Amoss** has made in prepping **Joel Politi**’s **Serengeti Empress** for Friday’s Kentucky Oaks (GI) is a jockey change, calling on **Jose Ortiz** to ride her.

“He’s one of the top riders in the country and I’m pleased to have him aboard,” Amoss said Thursday after **Serengeti Empress** had a light mile gallop with regular exercise rider **Francisco Herrera**. “We’re ready to go.”

The possibility of less-than-perfect track conditions for **Serengeti Empress**, who is the 8-1 co-fourth choice along with Breeders’ Cup Juvenile Fillies (GI) champion **Jaywalk**, because of rain isn’t on Amoss’ radar.

“Look, I’ve got enough worries, I’m not going to worry about that,” he said.

**STREET BAND** – The Fair Grounds Oaks (GII) winner **Street Band** galloped three-quarters of a mile under **Jorge Nava** Thursday in advance of Friday’s race.

Trainer **Larry Jones** is quick to credit jockey **Sophie Doyle** for the success of **Street Band**. The pair never has been worse than fourth since partnering last November at the Fair Grounds.

“She’s just very unique,” Doyle said. “All horses, especially fillies have distinct personalities. We get a long pretty well. From the moment you get on her, she’s pretty electric

underneath you. You just have to stay calm and keep her happy. As soon as I get on her, I start whistling to her and that’s her cue to relax.

“She’s so fun to ride. She has a beautiful stride. The first time I rode her, Larry asked if I thought she could stretch out to two turns. I said I’d be OK with that. We’ve done it twice now and she’s just getting better and better. This race should set up nice for her. I watched her train (Wednesday). She’s really taking this all in. She looked like a really classy, professional filly out there.”

Doyle, the sister of top European jockey **James Doyle**, is seeking to join **Rosie Napravnik**, who holds two victories in the Kentucky Oaks, as the only other female jockey to win the race.

When asked if she was nervous about her first mount in the Oaks, Doyle said, “No, none at all. It’s one of the most historic races along with the Kentucky Derby and I think it’s easy to forget that it is just a horse race. It’s the same thing I do every day. My brother James has ridden in a lot of world-class races and the best advice he gave me was to ride the Oaks like it was any other race. That’s what I’m doing. I’m having fun and getting excited for Friday.”

#### BARN LIST – KENTUCKY OAKS

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#### KENTUCKY DERBY NEWSFEED AVAILABLE VIA FTP UPLOAD

The Kentucky Derby Newsfeed is now available via FTP download. Files are 1080 HD and will be uploaded on a daily basis

To access Newsfeed footage & News Conferences via FTP client (Filezilla, Cyberduck, etc) use the following:

**Server:** ftp3.ftptoyoursite.com

**Username:** kyderby145

**Password:** 2019DerbyMedia

**Port:** 22

For further information, inquires or technical difficulties, please contact Jesse Kelsey, Vice-President of Hammond Communications Group, Inc. at (859) 492-5768.

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## NEW OAKS/DERBY PICK 6 HIGHLIGHTS DERBY WEEK WAGERING MENU

A new two-day Pick 6 that features six Grade I races, including the \$3 million Kentucky Derby Presented by Woodford Reserve and \$1.25 million Longines Kentucky Oaks, highlights a spectacular wagering menu for the 2019 Spring Meet at Churchill Downs.

Along with the new \$2 Oaks/Derby Pick 6, the wagering menu will also feature a \$1.5 million guaranteed Pick 5 on Kentucky Derby day that will end on the Kentucky Derby in Race 12 and the \$1 million guaranteed Bourbon Double for the Old Forester Turf Classic (GI) and Kentucky Derby. The 50-cent Pick 5, arguably the fastest growing wager in the U.S., features a 15% takeout. The Bourbon Double has a \$1 minimum denomination.

The Oaks/Derby Pick 6, which has a \$250,000 guaranteed pool, has a mandatory payout with a 15% takeout. The wager will begin Friday with the \$500,000 La Troienne – a 1 1/16-mile event for fillies and mares 4-year-olds and up, followed by the Kentucky Oaks – run at 1 1/8 miles for 3-year-old fillies. Saturday's races include the \$500,000 Humana Distaff – for fillies and mares 4-years-old and up at seven furlongs; the \$500,000 Churchill Downs – for 4-year-olds and up run at seven furlongs; the \$1 million Old Forester Turf Classic – for 4-year-olds and up run at 1 1/8 miles on the Matt Winn Turf Course; and the 1 1/4-mile Kentucky Derby.

The wagering menu will also include the 20-cent Single 6 Jackpot which began on Opening Night, April 27, and run through the entirety of the Spring Meet, including Oaks and Derby days. To win the entire Single 6 Jackpot, a player must have the only winning combination. If there are multiple winning combinations, 90 percent of the pool will be paid out and 10 percent will carry to the next day's card. The Single 6 Jackpot takeout is 15%.

Head-to-head wagers, which were approved earlier this month by the Kentucky Horse Racing Commission, will not be offered this year.

The full list of post times and wagering offerings are available here: <https://www.churchilldowns.com/racing-wagering/toteboard/post-times>.

## TWINSPIRES.COM OFFERS KENTUCKY DERBY TRAINING COMMENTARY

Renowned clocker **Gary Young** is in Louisville to lend his keen eye to TwinSpires.com in assessing how this year's Kentucky Derby entrants are training leading up to the Greatest Two Minutes in Sports on May 4 at Churchill Downs.

Young has a reputation among owners, breeders, and handicappers as one of the best clockers in the game, and his insight into a horse's development is prized by some of the most prominent owners in horse racing.

Scott Shapiro has hosted Young daily following morning training to pick the clocker's brain about who figures to fire his best shot on Saturday. To watch the videos, which include footage of the morning workouts, visit TwinSpires.com

<https://www.twinspires.com/blog/2019/05/01/what-to-take-away-from-kentucky-derby-contender-works-with-clocker-gary-young>

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